

CONTEMPORARY POETS, AND WRITERS OF FICTION.

No. XXXIII.—EDWARD LYTTON BULWER.

Who remembers not that elegant and accomplished exquisite — Pelham? — the glory of Bond Street, the dazzling, fascinating brilliant of the ball-room? And who remembers not Mordaunt—the tender, the devoted, the deeply-impassioned Mordaunt, gazing upon the “beautiful night,” and apostrophizing the shade of his lost, but “unforgotten” love? And who remembers not the vivacity, the brilliancy, the stirring adventures of Count Devereux? And who, remembering all these, could ever have expected, to see the author of Pelham, and his works, associated with the heroes of the Newgate Calendar? Yet, so it is. Well, the fact shows us—let the truism be pardoned, gentle reader!—that there is nothing so base in nature from which good may not be educed.

When the first loose rumour reached us of the nature of Mr. Bulwer's announced work, our imagination involuntarily reverted to the times—were they the “good old times,” which our elderly young ladies and gentlemen of the present day are so accustomed to laud?—when the heroes of the road, whose career had been cut short by the blind old woman with her scales and sword, ascended Holborn Hill in procession, sucking their last sweet oranges, and smelling to their last nosegays, previously to their delivery of a long funeral harangue for the edification of nursling pickpockets, boyish burglars, and youthful aspirants to the honours of the highway. Alas! and we thought, too, of Robert Dove, that pious citizen and merchant-tailor, who, as we find it recorded by the venerable Stow, in his *Survey*, “gave to the parish church of St. Sepulchre, the sum of £50, that, after the several sessions of London, when the prisoners remain in the gaol, as condemned men to death, expecting execution on the morrow following; the clerk [*i. e.* the priest, or parson] of the church should come in the night-time, and likewise early in the morning, to the window of the prison where they lie, and there ringing certain tolls with a hand-bell, appointed for the purpose, he doth afterward (in most Christian manner) put them in mind of their

present condition, and ensuing execution, desiring them to be prepared therefore as they ought to be. When they are in the cart, and brought before the wall of the church, there he standeth ready with the same bell, and after certain tolls rehearseth an appointed prayer, desiring all the people there present to pray for them. The beadle, also, of merchant-tailors'-hall, hath an honest allowed stipend, to see that this is duly done.”

Mr. Hume! Mr. Hume! does this said beadle of merchant-tailors'-hall continue honestly to earn his “honest allowed stipend?” Look to it, thou enemy of speculation and abuses, look to it, we pray thee. There was another custom, connected, as it would seem, with this, which we apprehend has been discontinued. It was the practice for the bellman of St. Sepulchre's parish, on the night before malefactors were to be executed, to come under Newgate and ring his bell, and repeat the following verses to the unfortunate men in the condemned hole:—

All you that in the condemn'd hold do lie,
Prepare you, for to-morrow you shall die.
Watch all and pray; the hour is drawing near,
That you before th' Almighty must appear.
Examine well yourselves, in time repent,
That you may not t' eternal flames be sent:
And when St. Pulchre's bell to-morrow tolls,
The Lord above have mercy on your souls!

Past twelve o'clock!

And who, thought we, can be a nobler model for Mr. Bulwer's hero, than that prince of fine fellows, that *beau idéal* of plundering gallantry and gallant plundering, Jack Sheppard—that glorious rascal, upon whose life, character, and behaviour many poems and plays were written—who sat to Sir James Thornhill, and to several other artists, for his portrait, whilst in the condemned hole—who was honoured by the production of a pantomime, entitled *Harlequin Sheppard*, at Drury Lane Theatre—whose ingenuity and extraordinary escapes became the theme for pulpit moralisers, one of whom thus piously parodied a minute and elaborate account which

had appeared of the great man's unexpected *retreat* from Newgate?—"Let me exhort ye then to open the locks of your hearts with the nail of repentance; burst asunder the fetters of your beloved sins; mount the chimney of hope, take from thence the bar of good resolution, break through the stone wall of despair, and all the strong holds in the dark entry of the valley of the shadow of death; raise yourselves to the leads of divine meditations. Fix the blanket of faith with the spike of the church. Let yourselves down to the turner's house of resignation, and descend the stairs of humility: so shall you come to the door of deliverance from the prison of iniquity, and escape the clutches of that old executioner the devil, who goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour."

Macheath is said to have been Jack Sheppard set to music; and really, if we are to take Mathews's portrait of the jolly dog as a correct one (who has not seen Mathews's Jack Sheppard?) the composer needed not to have much trouble with his subject.

And, verily, we do think that Mr. Bulwer has had Jack Sheppard in his eye; for his Paul Clifford, *alias* Captain Lovett, is a prime, dashing, gallant fellow, and, amidst all his atrocities, as averse from the shedding of blood as was the redoubtable Jack himself. Had he been of Mr. Fustian's acquaintance, that noble dramatist would, to a certainty, have taken him under his own special protection, and have designated his tragedy, not "The Humane Footpad,"* but "The Humane Highwayman."

But, to proceed.—Mr. Bulwer, who probably has not yet passed the age of five-and-twenty, has, within *two* years, produced *four* novels, and all of them successful; and yet, says one of our super-sapient critics, he "is no novelist." Be it so: it would be a sad pity to rob some people of their opinion; for strip them of that, and they will have nothing left. Mr. Bulwer's productions, as we have said, have all been successful; and, be it ever borne in mind, they are not—not one of them—of the class distinguished as "*fashionable* novels"—poor, sickly, feeble things, that can hardly

flutter through their ephemeral existence—wretched deformities, at the bare recollection of which our very stomach turns. No; Bulwer's novels have all good sound vigorous *stamina*, and will live, and flourish, and witness the extinction of whole hosts of the *fashionable* tribe. "Pelham," the first of the set, is distinguished by a vein of light, yet caustic satire—by accurate views of society in high life and in low life, in London and in Paris—by fresh and spirited sketches of character. Its hero, in tasteful and graceful, rather than in fashionable costume, with a slight simple *gage d'amour* upon his finger, is, as we pronounced him to be, on his first introduction to the public, "an elegantly-minded man—a man of wit, genius, and talent—a man of the world." Pelham, the hero of the tale, was almost universally identified with its author. If, says Mr. Bulwer, in his "Dedicatory Epistle" prefixed to *Paul Clifford*, "Pelham be at all what he was meant to be, *viz.* a practical satire on the exaggerated, and misanthropical romance of the day—a human being whose real good qualities put to shame the sickly sentimentalism of blue skies and bare throats, sombre coxcombs and interesting villainies; if he be at all like this, I am extremely proud to be mistaken for him. For though he is certainly a man who bathes and 'lives cleanly,' (two especial charges preferred against him by Messrs. the Great Unmasked,) yet he is also brave, generous, and just; a true friend, an active citizen—perfect in accomplishments—unshakeable in principles!—What! is this *my* portrait—*my* fac-simile, gentlemen?—Upon my word I am extremely obliged to you. Pray go on!—I would not interrupt you for the world!" Again, observes Mr. Bulwer, "the year before 'Pelham,' I published 'Falkland,' in which the hero was essentially of the gloomy, romantic, cloud-like order; in short, Sir Reginald Glanville out-Glanvilled. The matter-of-fact gentry, who say 'We,' and call themselves critics, declared that 'Falkland' was evidently a personation of the author: next year out came 'Pelham,'—the moral antipodes of 'Falkland,'—and the same gentry said exactly the same thing of 'Pelham.' Will they condescend to reconcile this contradiction? The fact is, that the moment any prominence, any corporeal quality is given to a

* *Vide* COLMAN's farce of *Sylvester Daggerwood*.

hero, and the hero (mark this) is not made ostentatiously good,—(nobody said I was like Mordaunt)—then the hero and the author are the same person.” In “The Disowned,” Mr. Bulwer displayed a deeper pathos, a fuller and a richer imagination, a firmer and more vigorous pencil in the delineation of human character. Lord Boro-daile—Mr. Brown, the little accommodating merchant—the mean, miserable, and detested Craufurd—Wolfe, the fierce, the sturdy, the unbending republican—Mordaunt, the good, the generous, the kind, the affectionate, the intellectual, the devoted Mordaunt—each and all evinced the skill of a master. Beautiful, spirited, and impressive, too, was “the episode of Warner, the ambitious artist, sacrificing every earthly enjoyment, even life itself, to a love of fame.” The besetting sins of this production originated in the erroneous idea adopted by the author, that although plot was the first requisite in a drama, it was one of the last in a novel. We rejoice to find that, on this point, Mr. Bulwer has since shown himself open to conviction: he has not only confessed, but abandoned, his errors. The fable of “The Disowned,” as we observed in our original notice of the work, is extremely inartificial in its construction—“the attention and interest are sadly distracted by deficiency of connexion; but these faults are more than atoned for by a deep and searching knowledge of the human heart—by admirable skill in the delineation of character—by scenes of lively and intense power—and by numerous passages, not less delightful from their purity and pathos, than from the exquisite beauty of their composition.”

Though, in “Devereux,” the third of Mr. Bulwer’s acknowledged novels, the same deficiency of plot, the same excellences, the same leading characteristics may be said to prevail; yet, from the difference of time, of scene, of personages introduced, and of opinions, sentiments, and principles expressed, the work is, not only in its general aspect, but in its nature, widely and strikingly different.

Now, we must be permitted to remark, that the very fact, of each of Mr. Bulwer’s novels being essentially different from all the others—and “Paul Clifford” bears not the slightest resemblance to any one of them—is an unquestionable proof of genius.

The very circumstance, too, of critics and readers in general having identified the author with *several* of his heroes, is another unquestionable proof of genius: it shows that Mr. Bulwer’s characters have life, and spirit, and originality about them. Yet Mr. Bulwer disclaims originality. “I have only endeavoured,” says he, “to revive what had passed a little into neglect; and if my books have had any success, it is owing to the goodness of the school, and in spite of the faults of the disciple. The combination of the philosophic novel with the comic has indeed long since, in two great authors, been carried to a perfection, which, I confess, I think is not likely to be attained, *longo intervallo*, by any succeeding writer.” The two writers here alluded to are Fielding and Dr. Moore.

Of “Paul Clifford,” Mr. Bulwer observes—“the hero of the story is an attempt to pourtray an individual of a species of which the country is now happily rid, but which seem to me to have possessed as many of the real properties of romance, especially comic and natural romance, as the foreign carbonari and exotic pirates whom it has pleased English writers, in search of captivating villains, to impart to their pages. For my part, I will back an English highwayman, masked, armed, mounted, and trotting over Hounslow Heath, against the prettiest rascal the Continent ever produced.” As we have before intimated, Mr. Bulwer has abjured the errors of his former works. “Perhaps,” he observes, “it will be found, that in this the story is better conducted, and the interest more uniformly upheld, than in my other productions. I have outlived the Recluse’s desire to be didascular [*didascalical*?], and I have avoided alike essay-writing and digression;—in a word, I have studied more than in my two last works to write a tolerably entertaining novel.” In this attempt, Mr. Bulwer has amply succeeded. We can hardly venture to pronounce the *story* of Paul Clifford a *good story*; but it is extremely well conducted—the incidents arise and follow naturally—the *dénouement*—the moral—is very ably, powerfully, effectively wrought out. Mr. Bulwer’s grand aim, however, is of a far higher order than that of exhibiting a smart fellow for his hero, or of writing “a tolerably entertaining novel.” His romance

of "Paul Clifford" is a formidable satire on "things as they are"—on vice and corruption, political and moral—on the existing state of society and of the laws. Thus, with reference to "one of those periodical visitations so fraught with dread and dismay to the miserable inmates of the dark abodes which the complex laws of this country so bounteously supply—those times of great hilarity and eating to the legal gentry,

Who feed on crime and fatten on distress,
And wring vile mirth from suffering's last excess—

the writer indignantly exclaims—

Ah! excellent order of the world, which it is so wicked to disturb! How miraculously beautiful must be that system which makes crime out of the scorching tears of guilt; and from the suffocating suspense, the agonised fear, the compelled and self-mocking bravery, the awful sentence, the despairing death-pang of one man, furnishes the smirking expectation of fees, the jovial meeting, and the mercenary holiday to another! "Of law, nothing less can be said, than that her seat is the bosom of God."* To be sure not, Richard Hooker, you are perfectly right. The divinity of a sessions, and the inspiration of the Old Bailey, are undeniable!

And here is a scene—here is an exposition of the kindly feelings of the lower classes; and such expositions, we grieve to say, we have ourselves witnessed. Still we are at the assize town, on the eve of the trial of Lovett, the hero of the tale, on a charge of highway robbery:—

"Ben," said a stout yeoman, tossing up a halfpenny, and catching the said coin in his right hand, which he immediately covered with the left—"Ben, heads or tails that Lovett is hanged; heads hanged, tails not, for a crown."

"Petticoats, to be sure," quoth Ben, eating an apple—and it was heads!

"Damme, you've lost!" cried the yeoman, rubbing his rough hands with glee. So much for the good hearts of your lower classes! Out on the beastliness of the pseudo-liberals, who cry up the virtues of the poor. If they are virtuous, why would you reform them? 'Tis because they are not virtuous that you should look to the laws that oppress them, and the ignorance that deludes!

It would have been a fine sight for Asmodeus, could he have perched on one of the house-tops of the market-place of —, and looked on the

murmuring and heaving sea of mortality below. Oh! the sight of a crowd round a court of law, or a gibbet, ought to make the devil split himself with laughter.

Of a more amusing, though scarcely less severely satirical stamp, is "The Libellous Parallel of Augustus Tomlinson," "between the life of the gentleman adorning his Majesty's senate, and the life of the gentleman" whom the police officers were "conducting to his Majesty's gaol."

We enter our career, as your embryo ministers enter parliament,—by bribery and corruption. There is this difference, indeed, between the two cases:—*we* are enticed to enter by the bribery and corruption of *others*,—*they* enter spontaneously, by dint of their *own*. At first, deluded by romantic visions, we like the glory of our career better than the profit, and in our youthful generosity, we profess to attack the rich solely from consideration for the poor. By and by, as we grow more hardened, we laugh at these boyish dreams,—peasant or prince fares equally at our impartial hands; we grasp at the bucket, but we scorn not the thimble-full; we use the word glory only as a trap for proselytes and apprentices: our fingers, like an office-door, are open for all that can possibly come into them: we consider the wealthy as our salary, the poor as our perquisites. What is this, but a picture of your member of parliament ripening into a minister,—your patriot mellowing into your placeman? And, mark me, Mr. Nabber! is not the very language of both similar as the deeds? What is the phrase either of us loves to employ? "To deliver,"—what? "The Public."—And do we not both invariably deliver it of the same thing?—*viz.* its *purse*! Do we want an excuse for sharing the gold of our neighbours, or abusing them, if they resist?—is not our mutual—our pithiest plea—"Distress!" True, your patriot calls it "distress of the country," but does he ever a whit more than we do mean any distress but his own? When we are brought low, and our coats are shabby, do we not both shake our heads and talk of "reform?" And when—oh! when we are up in the world, do we not both kick "reform" to the devil?

After alluding to the vacating of seats—accepting the hundreds—full pockets—grand dinners—sporting horses on the race-course, and looking big at the bubbled multitude, &c., the philosophising and moralising Augustus Tomlinson thus proceeds:—

Is not this your minister come into office? Does not this remind you of *his* equipage, *his* palace, *his* plate? In both cases, lightly won.

* Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity.

lavishly wasted; and the public, whose cash we have fingered, may at least have the pleasure of gaping at the figure we make with it! This then is our harvest of happiness; our foes, our friends, are ready to eat us with envy—yet what is so little enviable as our station? Have we not both our common vexations and our mutual disquietudes? Do we not both bribe our enemies, cajole our partisans, bully our dependents, and quarrel with our only friends, *viz.* ourselves? Is not the secret question with each—It is all confoundedly fine; but how long will it last? Now, Mr. Nabben, note me,—reverse the portrait: we are fallen—our career is over—the road is shut to us, and new plunderers are robbing the carriages that once we robbed.—Is not this the lot of—No, no! I deceive myself!—Your ministers, your job-men, for the most part milk the popular cow while there's a drop in the udder. Your Chancellor declines on a pension,—your minister attenuates on a grant,—the feet of your great rogues may be gone from the Treasury benches, but they have their little fingers in the Treasury. Their past services are remembered by his Majesty,—ours only noted by the Recorder: they save themselves, for they hang by one another; we go to the devil, for we hang by ourselves: we have our little day of the public, and all is over; but it is *never* over with them. We both hunt the same fox, but we are your fair riders: they are your knowing ones—we take the leap, and our necks are broken: they sneak through the gates, and keep it up to the last!

But this is mere *badinage*: let us have a fling at higher game—the lawyers. Sterne said, that the worst of all cants was the cant of criticism. Sterne was in error. He had never witnessed the cant, the loathsome cant of the bar, or such an opinion would not have been expressed on his page. Here, for instance, is an unfortunate political writer, who, in the honest and honourable support of his party—perhaps in advocating the best interests of his King and of his country—happens—for it is all chance—to be guilty of writing a libel—guilty of committing a crime which even a lawyer cannot define—guilty of committing a crime, the perpetration of which nothing but an utter abandonment of the pen can secure any man against. This unfortunate person—we, be it remembered, are not pleading the cause of the unprincipled, the vicious, the profligate libeller; we are not endeavouring to make the worse appear the better reason—this unfortunate person is instantly branded as a *hireling*—as a **BASE HIRELING!** And by whom, and by what,

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is he so branded? Why, by a lawyer—by a fellow who goes into court because he is *paid* for going—because, for *hire*, he is ready and willing to undertake the cause of *any* man, howsoever base and infamous! The fiction of the law, that a lawyer knows nothing but what is in his brief, is *indeed* a *fiction*, and is justly scouted every where but in the court. In civil cases, how often does the lawyer go into court—of course there are exceptions—with a guilty knowledge that he is about to plead the cause of a villain; that his aim is to oppose, to defeat, to triumph over, and in many instances to ruin, a just and honourable man? Why does he do this? Because he is *paid* for it—because he is *hired* to do the dirtiest of dirty work! Yet *this* fellow must not be termed a **HIRELING**, forsooth! Oh, no! he is in the honourable practice of an honourable profession! “Shame! Shame! where is thy blush?”—Certainly, not upon the *lawyer's* cheek.

Mr. Bulwer's portrait of the counsel for the Crown, in the prosecution of Captain Lovett, *alias* Clifford, is capital.

Mr. Dyebright was a lawyer of great eminence; he had been a Whig all his life, but had latterly become remarkable for his insincerity, and subservience to the wishes of the higher powers. His talents were peculiar and effective. If he had little eloquence, he had much power; and his legal knowledge was sound and extensive. Many of his brethren excelled him in display; but no one, like him, possessed the secret of addressing a jury. Winningly familiar, seemingly candid to a degree that scarcely did justice to his cause, as if he were in an agony lest he should persuade you to lean a hair-breadth more on his side of the case than justice would allow; apparently all made up of good, homely, virtuous feeling; a disinterested regard for the truth; a blunt yet tender honesty, seasoned with a few amiable fire-side prejudices, which always come home to the hearts of your fathers of families and thoroughbred Britons; versed in all the niceties of language, and the magic of names; if he were defending crime, carefully calling it misfortune; if attacking misfortune, constantly calling it crime; Mr. Dyebright was exactly the man born to pervert justice, to tickle jurors, to cozen truth with a friendly smile, and to obtain a vast reputation as an excellent advocate.

Here, from the early part of the learned counsel's speech, is an exquisite specimen of that mock pathos, that hypocritical slang, of which, “many a time and oft,” the fre-

quarters of our courts of justice must have been surfeited:—

He should, with the most scrupulous delicacy, avoid every remark calculated to raise unnecessary prejudice against the prisoner. He should not allude to his unhappy notoriety, his associations with the lowest dregs.—(Here up jumped the counsel for the prisoner, and Mr. Dyebright was called to order.)—"God knows," resumed the learned gentleman, looking wistfully at the jury, "that my learned friend might have spared himself this warning. God knows, that I would rather fifty of the wretched inmates of this county-gaol were to escape unharmed, than that a hair of the prisoner you behold at the bar should be unjustly touched. The life of a human being is at stake; we should be guilty ourselves of a crime, which on our deathbeds we should tremble to recall, were we to suffer any consideration, whether of interest or of prejudice, or of undue fear for our properties and lives, to bias us even to the turning of a straw against the unfortunate prisoner."

After proceeding at some length in this strain, the exordium is thus worthily closed:—

"But, Gentlemen,—(Mr. Dyebright's voice at once deepened and faltered)—there is a duty, a painful duty, we owe to our country; and never, in the long course of my professional experience, do I remember an instance in which it was more called forth than in the present. Mercy, gentlemen, is dear, very dear to us all; but it is the deadliest injury we can inflict on mankind when it is bought at the expense of justice."

The trial proceeds—witnesses are examined—the prisoner is called on for his defence; and in that defence are some most powerful points—*powerful*, because, unfortunately, they are true. They call for—they imperatively demand—the earnest attention of the legislature; for all the reforms which have been introduced by Mr. (now Sir Robert) Peel, in the criminal code, salutary though they may be, leave untouched the evils complained of.

Your laws (says Clifford) are but of two classes: the one makes criminals, the other punishes them. I have suffered by the one—I am about to perish by the other.

Of how many a lamentable case is this a correct and vivid picture!

My Lord, it was the turn of a straw which made me what I am. Four years ago, I was sent to the House of Correction for an offence which I did not commit. I went thither a boy

who had never infringed a single law,—I came forth, in a few weeks, a man who was prepared to break all laws! Whence was this change?—was it my fault, or that of my condemners? You have first wronged me by a punishment which I did not deserve,—you wronged me yet more deeply, when (even had I been guilty of the first offence) I was sentenced to herd with hardened offenders, and graduates in vice and vice's methods of support. The laws themselves caused me to break the laws! first, by implanting within me the goading sense of injustice; secondly, by submitting me to the corruption of example. Thus, I repeat,—and I trust my words will sink solemnly into the hearts of all present,—your legislation made me what I am! and it now *destroys me, as it has destroyed thousands, for being what it made me!*

Now, mark, reader, specially mark, what follows:—

But for this the first aggression on me, I might have been what the world terms honest,—I might have progressed to old age and a peaceful grave, through the *harmless cheateries of trade*, or the *honoured falsehoods of a profession*. Nay, I might have supported the laws which I have now braved; like the counsel opposed to me, I might have grown sleek on the vices of others, and advanced to honour by my ingenuity in hanging my fellow-creatures! The canting and prejudging part of the press has affected to set before you the merits of "honest ability," or "laborious trade." What, I beseech you, are the props of your "honest" exertion—the profits of "trade?" Are there *no bribes to menials?* Is there *no adulteration of goods?* Are the *rich* never duped in the *price they pay*,—are the *poor* never wronged in the *quality they receive?* Is there *honesty* in the bread you eat—in a single necessity which clothes, or feeds, or warms you? Let those whom the law protects consider it a protector: when did it ever protect *me?* When did it ever protect the poor man? The government of a state, the institutions of law, profess to provide for all those who "obey." Mark! a man *hungers!*—do you feed him? He is *naked!*—do you clothe him? If not, you break your covenant, you drive him back to the first law of nature, and you hang him, not because he is guilty, but because you have *left* him naked and starving!

The prisoner is convicted, and sentence of death is passed on him by the judge—by the very man through whom he had been first sent to prison on the false charge of stealing his watch—by his own father

Perhaps it is hardly worth while to enter upon any notice of the plot of this very

clever philosophical novel. In fact, we could not manage it effectively, unless we had a much larger space than we can command; for, as far as the mere story is concerned, it is in the working out of the details that the merit chiefly lies. Paul Clifford, the offspring of an abandoned woman, is left by his mother, when on her deathbed, in charge of the landlady of a public-house frequented by the lowest order of thieves, in one of the most obscure quarters of London. The old woman discharges her trust faithfully and kindly, to the best of her judgment and power. The boy is somewhat strangely provided with the rudiments of education, which he afterwards improves by study. His propensities are not naturally evil; but his associates are bad, and he suffers accordingly. At the theatre, while yet a lad, he sees a beautiful girl, the niece of Counsellor Brandon. Long Ned, the companion of Paul Clifford, robs the lawyer of his watch, and Paul, as has been seen, is unjustly committed to the House of Correction. There he meets with an old acquaintance, Augustus Tomlinson, a literary, philosophical, and moralising plunderer. The two worthies effect their escape, and join a notorious gang of thieves—highwaymen, of which, in process of time, Paul, as Captain Lovett, becomes the commander. Their exploits are numerous and successful; but at length the Captain—Long Ned, *alias* Mr. Edward Pepper—and Augustus Tomlinson, with the view of becoming *honest*, and retiring from *public* life, determine that one of the three shall marry an heiress, and that her fortune shall be equally divided amongst them. Bath is to be the scene of action, and Paul the matrimonial hero. He again encounters Miss Brandon, now a fine and beautiful young woman—ingratiates himself with her father, an underwitted baronet—and falls actually and desperately in love with the lady. His honour, however,—for there is said to be honour amongst thieves—will not allow him to prosecute the scheme, though his passion is fully returned. Besides this, he is opposed in his views by a somewhat antiquated lover, Lord Manleverer, the political friend and confederate of Counsellor Brandon, who had been looking up to a judge-ship, a peerage, and the wool-sack. The first of these he has achieved.

Finding their cash run low, Paul's companions, against the express injunctions of their chief, commit numerous depredations on the road. Paul himself, for the second time, assists in attacking and plundering Lord Manleverer to an immense amount. The officers of justice are in pursuit. Betrayed in their cave, by Peter Mac Grouler, their cook, a Scotchman, ex-editor of "*The Asinæum*," tutor of Paul Clifford, &c., Long Ned and Augustus Tomlinson are taken. Paul escapes; but, in effecting the rescue of his comrades, he, in turn, falls into the clutches of the police, is committed to prison, and put upon his trial. The specious hypocrite, the artful, wily, ambitious lawyer, Brandon, now a judge, proves to be Paul Clifford's father. For years he had been prosecuting a fruitless search for him, with the view of refounding an ancient, honourable, but decayed family; and he discovers the lost one only the very moment before it becomes his official duty to pronounce upon him the awful sentence of the law. Brandon, it appears, had basely sold his young and beautiful wife to the profligate nobleman, Lord Manleverer; and, on her discovery of the infamous act, and in revenge for other outrages, the lady, who thought she had been merely following the bent of her own vicious inclinations, had contrived to force the child from the protection of his father, and effectually to conceal him from research. Brandon dies a sudden and awful death; Paul Clifford obtains a mitigation of his sentence to that of transportation for life; and, joined by his faithful and devoted Lucy, he becomes a bright example of virtue in America; thus establishing the truth of Wilkes's celebrated remark, that "*the very worst use to which you can put a man is to hang him.*" But, as we have intimated, the chief merit of the story, as a story, must be sought in its details.

Of the lighter comic characters in Paul—Gentleman George, Fighting Attie, Old Bags, Mabling Francis, Long Ned, Scarlet Jem, &c., the different members of the gang—we offered some amusing specimens in our last month's "*Mélanges*." We have heard these objected against on the score of taste: the force of the objection we do not perceive. The idea of "the satirical adaptation of living personages to fictitious characters in the station or profes-

sion of life which Old Bags and Long Ned adorn," was, it appears, suggested by a friend; and, really, we quite agree in feeling with the writer, where he says, the broadness and evident want of malice in the caricatures referred to will, I venture to foretell, make those caricatured the first to laugh at the exaggerated resemblance.

Mr. Bulwer—we know not why—has a mortal antipathy against critics, and especially against Scotch writers. "For any occasional retaliation on critics, enemies, and Scotchmen," he observes—" (with me, for the most part, they have been found three appellations for the same thing), for many very hard words, and very smart hits against myself—I offer no excuse:—my retaliation is in the spirit of English warfare—blows at one moment, and good humour the next." Augustus Tomlinson is made to say—

A circumstance obliged me to leave London rather precipitately. Lord Dunshunner joined me in Edinburgh. • • • • But, instead of doing any thing *there*, we were done! The veriest urchin that ever crept through the High Street is more than a match for the most scientific of Englishmen. With us it is art; with the Scotch it is nature. They pick your pockets, without using their fingers for it; and they prevent reprisal, by having nothing for you to pick.

And Long Ned cries out—

In that country, there are either no robbers, because there is nothing to rob; or the inhabitants are all robbers, who have plundered one another, and made away with the booty.

However, Mr. Bulwer has certainly sustained some attacks—assaults rather—which,

as far as we can judge, were neither called for, nor are they founded in justice. Amongst other instances, he has had the honour of being set down as "no novelist," in an article of four-and-twenty closely-printed pages;—an article in every respect worthy of the pen of Peter Mac Growler himself; and, curiously enough, the writer puts the cap upon his own head, and, with surprising candour, acknowledges himself the original from which that highly-coloured portrait is drawn! But for this *admission*, we should have regarded Mac Growler as an incongruous, a most hideous caricature—the monster of a distempered fancy.

Mr. Bulwer has incurred the high and mighty displeasure of another critic; and, for what, thinkest thou? Why, for having presumed to meddle with the most presuming meddler of the age;—for having had the temerity to differ in opinion, on certain points of moral philosophy, from the author of *The Two-penny Post Bag*!

We cannot close this paper, already perhaps somewhat too much extended, without remarking that it is into the character of Brandon—the crafty, the revengeful, the ductile, the ambitious Brandon—that Mr. Bulwer has thrown his entire strength. The truth, the force, the power displayed in delineating the character of Brandon—a character perfectly consistent, and altogether in such fine keeping with itself—are wonderful—are alone more than sufficient to establish the author's reputation as a man of genius—a deeply-studied philosopher—an acute and learned anatomist of the human heart.

H.